

## **REMARKS**

Claims 1, 6, 11 and 12 stand rejected under § 102 on the basis of Watanabe, and claims 2-5 and 7-10 stand rejected under § 103 on the basis of Watanabe and Nemazie. Independent claims 1 and 6 have been amended to better define the present invention over the cited references.

Applicant traverses the rejection of independent claims 1 and 6 because Watanabe does not disclose (or suggest) a slipping process that continues sequentially through the last track, as in claims 1 and 6 as amended.

Watanabe apparently leaves a notch for each sector for skipping bad tracks, and it only slips to the last track of each notch (col. 6, lines 54-55). A spare region for slip tracks exists at the end of the notch (col. 7, lines 33-39). In contrast, the slipping process of the present invention continues sequentially through the last track.

Applicant also traverses the rejection of independent claims 1 and 6 because Watanabe does not disclose (or suggest) the error detecting part of the amended claims. In Watanabe, track replacement must be executed when a magnetic head cannot be positioned to the concerned track due to defects in the servo information (col. 6, lines 38-41). Watanabe does not suggest an error detecting part that detects an error in the track following information while setting recording areas by a recording area setting part, in which recording areas spanning from a recording area including track following information having the error to a recording area including next track following information are replaced by other recording areas by performing a slipping process.

Accordingly, withdrawal of independent claims 1 and 6, and their respective dependent claims, is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicant believes that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicant's attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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September 7, 2004

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